
II. SUMMARY OF COMMITMENTS

Individual work commitments for the GBNEP are documented in the following sections of this report. These commitments will result in six key reports (products) related to the explicit purposes of the Water Quality Act of 1987 and to guidance supplied by EPA, Office of Marine and Estuarine Protection (Table 1). While these are the program emphases agreed upon by the EPA and State, additional project work and interim publications will be required to accomplish these commitments, and will be specified at the more detailed level appropriate in annual workplans.

The first report will be a ranked list of the Bay's environmental problems. This Priority Problems List will be the basis for undertaking analyses of existing Galveston Bay data, and for specifying new investigations. The environmental problems on this list are ranked for importance to the program, based on specific criteria listed herein, to insure that work progresses toward effective management solutions to pressing problems in the estuary. The Priority Problems List has already been approved by the Policy Committee in draft form (February 3, 1989), and is expected to be modified as the program proceeds to continually direct the work toward an effective management result. A final Priority Problems List will be published by April 1990. The list will reflect ongoing direct public involvement from public forums and from organized Scientific/Technical Advisory Committee and Citizens Advisory Committee efforts.

Second, a Program Inventory will be produced in June 1990. This will summarize current and historical programs conducted by a wide variety of agencies and institutions. The Program Inventory will gather this information as a general resource for program participants, but more importantly, the Inventory will characterize existing data sets to determine their potential use for better understanding the Bay's problems. The Inventory will moreover lay a foundation for integration of the historically diverse management efforts directed at Galveston Bay by the various arms of government. The Program Inventory will exceed OMEP requirements by including all agencies and institutions, rather than just federal agencies.

Third, a Base Programs Action Plan will be developed in July 1991 to improve existing federal and state programs in Galveston Bay. The Plan will make direct use of the Program Inventory and will contribute to formulation of improved monitoring and management activities during CCMP development. The Base Programs Action Plan will include recommendations aimed at eliminating duplicated efforts and filling gaps or strengthening existing base programs. This effort is begun early in the program so that program changes can be implemented prior to the CCMP for more immediate protection of water quality and living resources. In combination with the Base Programs Action Plan, and to further contribute to "Action Now" guidance supplied by OMEP, interim management actions will be undertaken whenever program findings indicate the need. The initial direction for these management actions has already been supplied in action plans proposed on pages 56-60 of the Governor's Supplemental Nomination, and these management actions will also result from future program findings.

TABLE 1

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WATER QUALITY ACT PURPOSES,
EPA GUIDANCE PROVIDED, AND NEGOTIATED GBNEP PRODUCTS

WQA of 1987 Purpose	EPA/OMEP Guidance Item	GBNEP Product	Date
	1. Priority Problems List	Priority Problems List	April 1990
	2. Federal Program Inventory	Program Inventory	June 1990
	3. Base Programs Analysis/ "Action Now Agenda"	Base Programs Action Plan	July 1991
1. Trend Study	5. Status/Trends Study	Final Characterization Report	Jan. 1993
2. Cause/Effect Study	6. Cause-Effects/Loading Study	Final Characterization Report	Jan. 1993
3. Loading Study		Final Characterization Report	Jan. 1993
4. CCMP	7,8. Management Implementation	Draft, Final CCMP	March, Sept. 1994
5. Federal/State Coordination		Draft, Final CCMP	March, Sept. 1994
	4,7,8. Financial Strategy	Draft, Final CCMP	March, Sept. 1994
6. Monitoring	7,8. Monitoring	Draft, Final CCMP	March, Sept. 1994
7. Federal Consistency	7,8. Federal Consistency	Draft, Final CCMP	March, Sept. 1994

Fourth, a Characterization Report produced in January 1993 will encompass all efforts to define environmental trends, determine the causes of detrimental trends, and to link pollution and other human impacts to their associated problems in Galveston Bay. The Characterization Report will include the results of analyses of existing data, as well as work contracted to fill in any "gaps" identified in this historical data. This major three-year effort to characterize human impacts will result in annual "State of the Bay" reports in addition to other interim publications that will sustain involvement of participants and contribute to interim management actions. The final Characterization Report will be unique in summarizing all characterization work, as a basis for CCMP management recommendations.

The final two key reports are the Draft CCMP in March 1994, and the Final CCMP in September 1994. These will be a culmination of all GBNEP efforts. The CCMP will represent the consensus of participants for corrective actions to be undertaken, and for the compliance schedules, funding needs and sources, institutional jurisdictions and regulatory bases for these management activities. Some aspects of CCMP development, for example investigation of funding alternatives, will begin early in the program, concurrent with characterization studies. The Draft CCMP will be completed a full six months prior to the final CCMP to allow for extensive review and comment. The final CCMP will then be the foundation for years of management efforts beyond the five-year life of the GBNEP, and as such will provide for effective monitoring and flexible management responses for the future.

Throughout the five years of the GBNEP, much effort will be devoted to formulating an effective CCMP. However, numerous improvements in existing management activities are expected to be implemented prior to the final CCMP approval. The Base Programs Action Plan will recommend early actions to improve existing management activities. Interim "Action Now" projects will be implemented as critical problems are recognized in the estuary. The GBNEP will be a mixture of planning for long term improvements, and immediate action to address problems as they become better defined. These activities will, for the first time, integrate the efforts of the numerous governmental agencies and institutions.

Also throughout the GBNEP, public involvement and education will be key requirements for success. Public participation is vital because any regulatory changes or increased government efforts eventually cost the taxpayer. The public has a right to know the true condition of Galveston Bay and a right to figure in the solutions to its problems, just as it has a right to enjoy its economic and recreational benefits. Therefore, numerous public involvement activities will be undertaken. These include a quarterly newsletter, public meetings, slide and video presentations, and other activities detailed in the annual workplans.

Figure 2 summarizes GBNEP activities outlined in this agreement, along with the time schedule for their accomplishment.

Time Line for Completion of Galveston Bay National Estuary Program Tasks

